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EQUATORIAL GUINEA DRAMATICALLY REDUCES MALARIA IN CHILDREN

Government Partnership Develops \$15.8 Million Initiative to Reduce Malaria

MALABO, Equatorial Guinea (May 11, 2011) – The Republic of Equatorial Guinea has decreased the prevalence of the malaria parasite in children by 57% in just four years and has increased the number of children protected by bed nets or indoor spraying of insecticides from 4% to 95% in that same period, according to a report by Roll Back Malaria. Research carried out on the Island of Bioko, funded by the government of Equatorial Guinea and a private consortium led by Marathon Oil Corporation, showed a reduction in infant mortality in nearly one third of the population. The program to control malaria is part of a broader effort by the government, through the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, to improve public health in the West African nation.

The anti-malaria project is currently focused on the island of Bioko, where more than half the population of Equatorial Guinea lives, and has been extended to 2013 to develop local capacity and enable the campaign to reach the mainland. The project has won numerous high-profile awards for social responsibility and good citizenship.

The sixth report on Business Investing in Malaria Control: Economic Returns and a Healthy Workforce for Africa showcases how malaria control investment has significantly improved in Africa. "Companies in Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Mozambique, and Zambia have worked to prevent malaria among their workers and workers' dependents and have seen an excellent return on investment, with significant reductions in malaria-related illnesses and deaths, worker absenteeism, and malaria related spending".

The Malaria Control Project is a fundamental part of the government-wide effort to meet the goals of the Horizon 2020 development plan set by President Obiang Nguema Mbasogo. Equatorial Guinea has heavily invested in public health. The government has donated \$1.5 million and a headquarters facility to the World Health Organization (WHO) to support research for global health. It has also provided technical assistance to the local United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to improve the effectiveness of its Assistance Program as well as the implementation of a host of health programs geared towards improving the health of Equatorial Guineans.

About Equatorial Guinea

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea (República de Guinea Ecuatorial) is the only Spanish-speaking country in Africa, and one of the smallest nations on the continent. In the late-1990s, American companies helped discover the country's oil and natural gas resources, which only within the last five years began contributing to the global energy supply. Equatorial Guinea is now working to serve as a pillar of stability and security in its region of West Central Africa. The country will host the 2011 Summit of the African Union. For more information, visit <http://www.guineaequatorialpress.com>.

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